

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 741

[Report No. 119-]

To elevate the position of Director of the Indian Health Service within the Department of Health and Human Services to Assistant Secretary for Indian Health, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 28, 2025

Mr. STANTON (for himself and Mr. JOYCE of Ohio) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

JUNE --, 2026

Reported from the Committee on Natural Resources with amendments

[Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert the part printed in *italie*]

[For text of introduced bill, see copy of bill as introduced on January 28, 2025]

A BILL

To elevate the position of Director of the Indian Health Service within the Department of Health and Human Services to Assistant Secretary for Indian Health, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 *This Act may be cited as the “Stronger Engagement*
5 *for Indian Health Needs Act of 2025”.*

6 **SEC. 2. ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR INDIAN HEALTH.**

7 (a) *ESTABLISHMENT.*—*Section 601(a) of the Indian*
8 *Health Care Improvement Act (25 U.S.C. 1661(a)) is*
9 *amended—*

10 (1) *in paragraph (1), by striking “tribes” and*
11 *inserting “Tribes”;*

12 (2) *in paragraph (2)—*

13 (A) *by striking “a Director” and inserting*
14 *“an Assistant Secretary for Indian Health (in*
15 *this section referred to as the ‘Assistant Sec-*
16 *retary)’”;*

17 (B) *by striking “The Director shall report”*
18 *and inserting “The Assistant Secretary shall re-*
19 *port directly”;*

20 (C) *by striking “the Director” and inserting*
21 *“the Assistant Secretary”; and*

22 (D) *by striking “A Director” and inserting*
23 *“An Assistant Secretary”;*

24 (3) *in paragraph (3), by striking “date of enact-*
25 *ment of the Indian Health Care Improvement Reau-*

1 *thorization and Extension Act of 2009 shall serve as*
2 *Director” and inserting “date of enactment of the*
3 *Stronger Engagement for Indian Health Needs Act of*
4 *2025 shall serve as Assistant Secretary”;*

5 *(4) in paragraph (4), in the matter before sub-*
6 *paragraph (A), by striking “Director” and inserting*
7 *“Assistant Secretary”; and*

8 *(5) by adding at the end the following new para-*
9 *graph:*

10 *“(5) DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY.—The As-*
11 *stant Secretary may—*

12 *“(A) with the approval of the Secretary, ap-*
13 *point a Deputy Assistant Secretary; and*

14 *“(B) consistent with applicable law, utilize*
15 *officers and employees of the Department as nec-*
16 *essary to administer the activities of the Serv-*
17 *ice.”.*

18 *(b) DUTIES.—Section 601(c) of the Indian Health*
19 *Care Improvement Act (25 U.S.C. 1661(c)) is amended—*

20 *(1) in the matter before paragraph (1), by strik-*
21 *ing “Director” and inserting “Assistant Secretary”;*
22 *and*

23 *(2) in paragraph (1), by striking “date of enact-*
24 *ment of the Indian Health Care Improvement Reau-*
25 *thorization and Extension Act of 2009” and inserting*

1 *“date of enactment of the Stronger Engagement for*
2 *Indian Health Needs Act of 2025”.*

3 (c) *AUTHORITY.*—Section 601(d)(1) of the Indian
4 Health Care Improvement Act (25 U.S.C. 1661(d)(1)) is
5 amended in the matter before subparagraph (A), by striking
6 “Director” and inserting “Assistant Secretary”.

7 (d) *REFERENCES.*—Section 601 of the Indian Health
8 Care Improvement Act (25 U.S.C. 1661) is amended by
9 adding at the end the following new subsection:

10 “(e) *REFERENCES.*—Any reference to the Director of
11 the Indian Health Service in any Federal law, Executive
12 order, rule, regulation, or delegation of authority, or in any
13 document of or relating to the Director of the Indian Health
14 Service, shall be deemed to refer to the Assistant Sec-
15 retary.”.

16 (e) *RATE OF BASIC PAY.*—

17 (1) *POSITIONS AT LEVEL IV.*—Section 5315 of
18 title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking
19 “Assistant Secretaries of Health and Human Services
20 (6)” and inserting “Assistant Secretaries of Health
21 and Human Services (7)”.

22 (2) *POSITIONS AT LEVEL V.*—Section 5316 of
23 title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking
24 “Director, Indian Health Service, Department of
25 Health and Human Services.”.

Amend the title so as to read: “A bill to redesignate the position of Director of the Indian Health Service within the Department of Health and Human Services as Assistant Secretary for Indian Health, and for other purposes.”.